

NSC BRIEFING

10 December 1953

INITIAL WORLD REACTION TO  
PRESIDENT EISENHOWER'S UN ADDRESS

Initial Soviet reaction to President Eisenhower's proposal for an atomic pool for peaceful purposes suggests that the Kremlin will reject the offer. Moscow seized upon the President's omission of any reference to the banning and control of atomic weapons, thus indicating that the USSR will continue to oppose any plan which does not meet the conditions outlined in the Soviet disarmament proposal before the UN.

Western reaction to the speech has been generally favorable and has expressed the hope that the new approach would break the present impasse.

Communist:

USSR: Andrei Vishinsky told the UN General Assembly's closing session that without an unconditional ban on atomic weapons "the assurance that atomic energy can be used for peace cannot be guaranteed." Radio Moscow commentators added that the President made a "eulogy of a policy of force," that he "actually came out with a threat of atomic warfare ... to scare his listeners ... rather than to have them hope that the danger of such war can be eliminated."

East Berlin: A Home Service broadcast quoted a New York comment that "owing to the steadily growing influence of the world peace movement, President Eisenhower felt compelled in the UN General Assembly to announce what amounts to the end of the US policy of atomic blackmail toward the USSR and all peace-loving countries the world over."

Czechoslovakia: A Prague broadcast asserted that President Eisenhower supplemented the Bermuda communique of the three Western powers - "which is full of contradictions - by a statement characteristic of US atomic policy."

Poland: The Warsaw Home Service broadcast a short summary of the President's address and added that "UN circles stress that his speech completely ignored the essential problem: the prohibition of production and use of atomic and hydrogen weapons."

Italy: An Italian Communist-directed Cominform broadcast summarized the speech and commented that President Eisenhower failed to say whether the US would support an immediate ban on atomic weapons as called for in the Soviet disarmament proposal.

London: The Daily Worker called the speech a "blackmailing threat against the Soviet Union."

Paris: Communist Humanite said that "behind the great words one recognizes a new version of the Baruch plan for US control of world atomic energy."

New York: The Daily Worker commented that the President's proposal "not only dodged the question of banning production of atomic and hydrogen weapons, but ignored the question of inspection and control, and proposed an agency which, in view of the State Department's dominant role in the UN, would give Wall Street trusts a monopoly over the world's uranium resources. Such a scheme was the heart of the Baruch plan ...."

Western World

UN: Non-Orbit diplomats in the UN, including the representatives of Lebanon, Syria, Iraq and Turkey praised the initiative taken by the President to make atomic energy work for peace.

The Indian UN representative, V. K. Krishna Menon remarked that the speech was "very important" and added that the success of the plan "depends on how people join in it." A delegate from Pakistan remarked that he could not see how the plan could be carried out.

Yugoslavia: Radio Belgrade reported that almost all Yugoslav papers stress that the speech has met with approval and that it represents a contribution to the creation of a better atmosphere in the field of disarmament and control of atomic weapons.

Britain: In Britain, as in the rest of Europe, the general official reaction to the President's 8 December speech is that it will be most interesting to see the Soviet Union's reaction. The Times said editorially that the speech "suggested a first practical step which could be taken without agreement on a full-scale plan of disarmament." The Manchester Guardian cautioned that unless the proposed international agency has a monopoly of fissionable materials, "it would offer no new safeguard to the world." "Informed British sources" are quoted as saying that Britain would leap at the chance to take part in the UN atomic agency, and that the President's proposal would revive faith in the United States' wisdom and ability to lead the world.

A London Daily Mirror columnist, one of the United States' most consistent and severe critics, alleged that Sir Winston Churchill talked the President out of making "the biggest scare speech in history." Critical British comment on the speech came from the Daily Mirror columnist "Cassandra," who said that the speech was instigated by C. D. Jackson in a psychological warfare move and that "Jackson's advice seems to range from advocating blatant demagoguery in Korea to vulgar muscle-bulging at the United Nations. Thus the luckless President pursues his stumbling career."

Canada: The Canadian trade minister said that his country fully supported the President's proposal. Another government official said that Canada would be able to make a major contribution to the proposed agency since all Canadian atomic research has been

France: Foreign Minister Bidault stated that the President's suggestion was very warmly welcomed by France. French diplomatic and political observers consider President Eisenhower's proposals as a new method of approaching the problem. They noted, however, that he avoided any reference to complete and immediate banning of atomic weapons, as well as mention of a control organization.

Daniel Mayer, Socialist Chairman of the National Assembly's Foreign Affairs Committee, said he saw signs of hope in Eisenhower's speech since the President had given up "certain parts of the Baruch plan which have been systematically refused by the Soviet Union for seven years."

West Germany: There has been little reaction thus far to President Eisenhower's UN speech in West Germany. The German Press Service reports that Bonn government circles have hailed the speech as a "considerable step forward," and have welcomed the President's remarks on the peaceful exploitation of atomic energy.

The press service observes that the speech will have a calming effect in Europe.

Austria: Most Austrian newspapers of 9 December appeared too early to report the Eisenhower address. The independent Die Presse is reported to have carried excerpts of what it calls "Eisenhower's dramatic appeal for atomic disarmament" and a "laudatory" editorial on the speech is printed by the influential Socialist paper, Arbeiter Zeitung. Text of the latter is not yet available.

Italy: In Italy, the rightist press praised President Eisenhower's 8 December speech as an "appeal to the world to impede atomic war." Leftist papers have said that it was "merely a disguise for failure and crisis of the mid-ocean club meeting," and that "the United States, having lost its atomic monopoly, makes an equivocal proposal for international control."

The independent Turin daily, La Stampa, commented that the main significance of the speech lies not so much in the technical suggestions made, but in the fact that "Eisenhower considered it necessary to expound the extreme gravity of the atomic threat by a personal statement to the forum of the United Nations."

India: The press welcomed President Eisenhower's speech and expressed hopes for easing world tension and for reassuring all nations that they have no cause to fear.

Greece: It was emphasized that President Eisenhower's speech before the UN had given rise to both fear and hope and that the fulfillment of the hope depended entirely upon the Soviet Union. In another Greek paper the President's address was described as one of historic importance and his proposal as the most positive offer of peace since the termination of World War II.

China: Agency France-Presse reported from Taipei that Nationalist officials regard the address as a "new step on the road of appeasement."

Nationalist officials in general tend to interpret as "appeasement" any statement of policy which seems to them to reduce their prospects for returning to control of mainland China.

Jass - long summary excerpts  
Pravda - 800 words (from Jass)  
Sov/ home Broadcast - 56 words -